

needs, I feel that LB 198 and the fees is just another piece of the water picture that needs to be put into place. We need to document all of our present water uses. Recharge water is important and is used in the state. Documentation of water rights has to be paid for. I feel where recharge has resulted in less pumping costs or no pumping costs as well as a more reliable or stable water supply, a fee is justified. I know that water users have not all supported this concept and I can see why. I feel there is a limited number of individuals who are knowledgeable concerning water laws and issues, therefore, it is harder for the public, including irrigators, to see the whole water picture. I feel it is a natural reaction for water users to reject any increased fees that they will need to pay. An irrigation district or project is always going to have some people who have been unhappy with service, land damage management, water damage, et cetera. LB 198 is a fresh opportunity for them to express past negatives again. With all this in mind as a project water user, my opinion remains as I stated in the beginning." So I feel that 198 would be a whole lot better bill if we did allow the process that is in the bill, and I realize that we are talking about the amendment now and it is all spelled out how this water fee would be charged and what they would have to go through in order to establish the fact that there was indeed a recharge effect by the existing irrigation districts. Now I know most of you feel that perhaps the Tri-County to the south of where I live is the most concerned about this but this is not true and I hope that Senator Barrett and perhaps Senator Lundy who are familiar with the north side of the river will also speak because there we have some of the oldest canals in the State of Nebraska and they do not have their water rights established for ground water recharge. If the state or the water control people would actually limit them to the number of gallons of water, acre feet of water that they are using for surface irrigation, they would be curtailed immensely. They wouldn't have enough water to operate on. So we need this funding in my estimation to prove our water rights and to establish them with the other states and also within the State of Nebraska. I really think you are crippling this bill if you do not allow that to happen. Now as for those that have gotten mail perhaps about too much water, I happen to be in that area where we would be glad to give somebody a little water right now because it is about at the top of the ground but we have put in drainage ditches and are able to control that, and I guess I would say that for instance in Tri-County's case if they can establish that they are putting the water into the aquifer and it is harming somebody, they are going to have to pay for it because it would